

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----191128Z 094803 /22

P R 190900Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3424
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 KHARTOUM 0197

EXDIS/NOFORN

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PFOR, PINS, SU, US
SUBJECT: USG RESPONSE TO NIMEIRI MESSAGE RE AREA SECURITY

REF: STATE 008923

BEGIN SUMMARY. NIMEIRI MOST APPRECIATIVE DEPT'S DETAILED ANALYSIS REFTEL. WHILE DIFFERING ON POINTS OF DETAIL AND PROVIDING SOME LATER INFO (SEPTTEL), HE DID NOT QUARREL WITH BULK OF PRESENTATION. HOWEVER, LARGELY ON BASIS CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE, HE CONTINUES BELIEVE SOVIET ROLE MORE SIGNIFICANT THAN SIMPLY NOT OBJECTING TO LARG ACTIVITIES. NIMEIRI ALSO CONTINUES BE CONCERNED BY LIBYAN THREAT AS HE SEES IT MANIFEST IN ETHIOPIAN, CHADIAN AND CAE BORDER AREAS. MINSTAFE FONAFFS INDICATED THAT USG MIGHT WISH CONSIDER SPEAKING TO SOVIETS RE WHOLE QUESTION STABILITY IN EAST AFRICA IN EFFORT ENCOURAGE THEM ACT MORE RESPONSIBLY, REGARDLESS OF WHETHER MOSCOW HAS BEEN INTIMATELY INVOLVED IN LIBYAN MACHINATIONS. HOWEVER, NIMEIRI HIMSELF MADE NO SUCH REQUEST AND SEEMED SATISFIED BY PRESENTATION. END SUMMARY.

1. PURSUANT REFTEL, I SAW PRESIDENT NIMEIRI JAN 18 AT HIS NEW FRIENDSHIP HALL OFFICE (BUILT BY CHINESE AID). MINSTATE FONAFFS DENG WAS PRESENT DURING CORDIAL AND WIDE-RANGING

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CONVERSATION COVERING MOST ASPECTS RECENT AREA DEVELOPMENTS. NIMEIRI'S OWN COMMENTS RE LATTER BEING SUBMITTED SEPTTEL FOR WIDER DISTRIBUTION.

2. HAVING IN MIND MINSTATE IDRIS'S EARLIER COMMENTS TO ME (KHARTOUM 3769; STATE 310713), I BEGAN BY ASSURING PRESIDENT THAT WE CONTINUE TO SUPPORT HIS STATESMANLIKE EFFORTS TO

RESOLVE AREA PROBLEMS AND HOPE TO DO WHAT WE CAN TO CULTIVATE OUR BILATERAL TIES AND ASSIST SUDANESE DEVELOPMENT. AGAINST THIS GENERAL BACKGROUND OF CORDIAL RELATIONSHIPS, WE WISHED SHARE WITH HIM ON MOST CONFIDENTIAL BASIS OUR OWN DETAILED ANALYSIS RE SOVIET INVOLVEMENT AND INTERESTS IN RED SEA AREA, IN LIGHT HIS EARLIER MESSAGE (KHARTOUM 0033). I THEN WENT OVER DETAILS IN REFTEL ASSESSMENT, EMPHASIZING THAT, WHILE IT HAD BEEN DRAFTED SOME DAYS AGO, IT REPRESENTED CONSIDERED JUDGMENT INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY RE SOVIET AND LIBYAN INTENTIONS.

3. NIMEIRI LISTENED CLOSELY, OCCASIONALLY ASKING FOR FURTHER EXPLANATION AND PERIODICALLY INTERJECTING HIS OWN COMMENTS. AS TO WHETHER LIBYANS HAVE ACTED AS SOVIET "AGENTS" IN DISTRIBUTING ARMS (PARA 7 REFTEL), NIMEIRI CLAIMED MOSCOW IS SUPERPOWER WHICH DOES NOT NEED MONEY FROM ARMS SALES AND ACCORDINGLY ITS DECISION SELL WEAPONS TO LIBYA REFLECTED SOVIET STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS. SOVIETS WERE, CLAIMED NIMEIRI, EXCEEDINGLY INTERESTED IN ETHIOPIA AS SHOWN BY FACT THAT, ALONE AMONG MAJOR POWERS, RUSSIANS HAD SENT HIM RECENT MESSAGE (KHARTOUM 0083) TO UNDERLINE MOSCOW'S FEELINGS THAT EPMG REPRESENTS PROGRESSIVE REGIME WHOSE PROBLEMS SHOULD NOT BE COMPLICATED BY ITS NEIGHBORS.

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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 KHARTOUM 0197

EXDIS/NOFORN

SOVIET AMBASSADOR HAD ADDUCED AS ADDED PROOF EPMG "DEMOCRATICIZATION" FACT THAT 500,000 WEAPONS (PORTION MANUFACTURED IN YUGOSLAVIA) HAVE BEEN DISTRIBUTED BY DIRG TO MASSES. NIMEIRI OPINED SOVIET SOLICITUDE FOR EPMG

STEMMED FROM ASSESSMENT BY MOSCOW THAT RUSSIAN POSITION IN SOMALIA HAD BROUGHT THEM CONSIDERABLE DIVIDENDS AND WAS SUFFICIENTLY FIRM TO PERMIT THEM SEEK WIDEN THEIR SPHERE OF INFLUENCE IN ADJACENT AREAS. HOWEVER, IN RESPONSE MY QUESTION, NIMEIRI CONFIRMED THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN USSR AND SOMALIA WRE LESS CORDIAL THEN FORMERLY, SINCE SOVIETS HAD BEEN URGING MOGADISCIO TO "FREEZE" OGADEN AND TFAI ISSUES. NIMEIRI SAID HE HAD ALREADY HAD ONE LONG TALK WITH SOMALI EMISSARY (KHARTOUM 0162, NOTAL) NOW HERE, AND WAS "WORKING HARD" TO FEED SOMALI SUSPICIONS OF RUSSIANS AND THUS WOO THEM AWAY FROM MOSCOW.

4. SUMMARIZING ANALYSIS, I SAID ITS THRUST WAS THAT LARG PLAYING PROVACATIVE ROLE IN AREA AND THAT RUSSIANS WERE NOT OBJECTING. NIMEIRI INTERJECTED: "THEY ARE ENCOURAGING IT (I.E. QADHAFI'S ACTIVITIES)". DENG COMMENTED THAT ASSESSMENT MIGHT BE CORRECT BUT, IF NOT, AND MAJOR THREAT TO AREA STABILITY WERE BREWING, WOULD USG BE CONCERNED RE SUDANESE STABILITY? WOULD SOVIETS BE WORRIED BY POSSIBILITY WIDER IMPLICATIONS?

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DENG WONDERED WHETHER SOMETHING SHOULD NOT BE DONE NOW, SUCH AS OUR SPEAKING TO SOVIETS, TO SEE MATTERS DID NOT GET OUT OF HAND, EVEN IF RUSSIANS WERE NOT BEHIND CURRENT LARG MACHINATIONS. I REPLIED THAT KEY QUESTION SEEMED TO BE ASSESSMENT OF THREAT. OUR ANALYSIS DID NOT INDICATE MAJOR CRISIS BREWING, AND SHOWED, MOREOVER, NUMBER CLEAR DIFFERENCES BETWEEN TRIPOLI AND MOSCOW AIMS. NIMEIRI DID NOT PRESS POINT NOR MAKE SPECIFIC REQUEST HIMSELF, BUT INDICATED HIS SUSPICIONS OF SOVIET INTENTIONS REMAIN.

5. COMMENT: AFTER WE LEFT NIMEIRI'S OFFICE, DENG COMMENTED THAT HE THOUGHT OUR DECISION GIVE PRESIDENT FULL PRESENTATION, "PARTICULARLY THE FIRST POINT" (PARA TWO ABOVE) HAD BEEN GOOD MOVE AND THAT NIMEIRI HAD BEEN IMPRESSED. FROM SUCH COMMENTS, PLUS NIMEIRI'S OWN REACTION DURING OUR TALK, BELIEVE EXERCISE HAS BEEN MOST HELPFUL BOTH IN UNDERLINING USG GOODWILL AND IN GIVING PRESIDENT DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE ON HIS CURRENT WORRIES. NIMEIRI NEVERTHELESS CLEARLY REMAINS PREOCCUPIED WITH WHAT HE SEES AS CONTINUING THREAT, RATHER THAN WITH ANY DETAILED ANALYSIS OF ITS PRECISE ORIGINS. AS HIS REMARKS SEPTTEL MAKE CLEAR, PRESIDENT CONTINUES BE CONCERNED BY INDICATIONS OF LARG-BACKED SUBVERSIVE ACTION FROM ETHIOPIA, CHAD AND CAE, THOUGH HE GAVE NO INDICATION FEARING MAJOR COUP ATTEMPT AFTER MANNER LAST JULY. LASTLY, NIMEIRI CLEARLY IMPLIED CONCERN AT RELATIVE USG INACTION, IN CONTRAST SOVIET ENERGY, IN FACE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS. PARTICULARLY SINCE OUR OWN PROGRAMS TO HELP SUDAN ARE STILL GATHERING WAY, IT IS CLEAR ANY NEW ILLUSTRATION OF WHAT MANY HERE SEE AS OUTMODED USG/ETHIOPIA RELATIONSHIP WOULD CAUSE GREAT SURPRISE TO GOS. BREWER

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